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Chapman

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Colica Pictonum

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Hardage Lane

admitted April 1st. 1810

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On the Tobacco Injection In Colica Pictonum

In selecting a subject for an inaugural dissertation, I am well aware of the expectation on such occasions, of something novel. Yet the limits which is prescribed, in a majority of instances, to the experimental enquiries of students of medicine, makes it hardly possible, for them, to add much light to subjects, which have occupied the research, of a number of most profound Physiologists and Pathologists. This, together with the danger in the application of experiments, derived, from analogy, to the human system, have deterred me, from the use, not of a new remedy; but one which has long been recommended in the treatment of Colica Pictonum: I mean the tobacco injection. Some facts which came under my notice, while residing at the lead mines, in Missouri Territory, ~~which~~ have induced me to believe, that the strength of the injection, might be much increased, with great benefit in the manage-

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=ment, of this most obstinate and painful of the diseases of the alimentary canal

Before proceeding to an account of the effects of the remedies recommended by writers in this disease, so far, as I have employed them; I think it not improper to enumerate its characteristics, as well as the various symptoms, which mark its course. At the same time omitting to notice, any other cause, than the fumes of lead, as when I have seen it, it could be ascribed to nothing else.

The symptoms which distinguish it, are most commonly; obstinate costiveness, a vomiting of acrid or porraceous bile, pains about the region of the navel, from thence to each side with excessive violence; strong and convulsive spasms of the intestines and abdominal muscles, with a tendency, to paralyses of the upper extremities

The following are the symptoms, which

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commonly attend it; and they are placed in the order in which, they generally succeed each other. Pains in the pit of the stomach extending to to the intestines, particularly round the navel, accompanied by sight sickness ~~of the~~ of the stomach, thirst, anxiety, a frequent but ineffectual desire to evacuate the contents of the bowels and quick contracted pulse, but seldom exceeding a hundred in a minute. After a while these pains increase considerably in violence, the whole region of the belly is highly painfull to the touch, the muscles of the abdomen are contracted into hard irregular knots or lumps, the intestines themselves exhibit ~~exhibit~~ symptoms of violent spasm, insomuch that a clyster can hardly be injected into them, from the powerfull contractions of the sphincter ani, and there is a constant restlessness; with a frequent vomiting of an aerid or porraceous matter; but more particularly after taking food or

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medicine. The late Doctor Rush mentioned cases having occurred, where feces were discharged. An instance of this kind, I met with in a negro man, who was employed at a lead furnace. In the two first days of the disease, he had several evacuations from the bowels; after that period a most obstinate costiveness supervened, which was not removed for several days

In all the cases which have come under my observation most of the remedies recommended were had recourse to and many of them without effect: for in every instance nausea and vomiting prevailed to such an extent, that food of every kind and medicine, as soon as received into the stomach, were uniformly rejected: except in one which I do not think too foreign to have a place here

A negroman the slave of a gentleman living in the village of Mine à Breton, to whom I was called, I found complaining of a most

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most excruciating pain in the umbilical region, the muscles of his abdomen were contracted into knots, & his body was bent forward, with inability without great pain, to alter his position: he evinced great restlessness and anxiety; his tongue was natural his pulse almost imperceptible and his skin moist and cold. Two grains of opium were given him, without any perceptible benefit; he then took from an ounce to two ounces of Glauters salts and was ordered to be immersed into a large tub of hot water, and retained in it, for half an hour; from which no relief was obtained. The opium was repeated and shortly afterwards a large dose of Jalap & Calomel; no alleviation of the symptoms appearing, he was ordered to stand on a dirt floor, which had but previously sprinkled with cold water, a quantity of which was also thrown upon his lower extremities, without any better result. An emolient clyster was then administered, which soon was expelled fol

lowed

-lowed by a considerable quantity of a darkish blood; a very short time after which he died

From circumstances unnecessary to be related here, I suspected that lead had been taken with the intention of committing suicide. Under this impression, I solicited permission to examine the body, but did not obtain it, untill putrefaction had progressed very considerably, (the case occurring in the month of July). Upon opening the abdomen, the small intestines appeared to be much contracted in their diameter and upon the first view there was no other remarkable appearance, but on further examination there were found in the appendicula vermiformis fourteen duckshot some lead ore and spars, and I suppose thirty or forty grains and perhaps more of the cinders which are usually found about the basins of lead furnaces

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-dicine or any thing else was at all retained, I have been impressed with the belief, that the stomach had become paralized by the powerful effects of the lead, and was thereby rendered inirritable to the impression of the medicines, that were taken into it

In relation to the various remedies, I have but little to say, and shall only notice a few of them. I resorted to venesection only in one case, but without apparent advantage. I am not however unwilling to admit that the want of efficacy, may have arisen from its not having been carried to sufficient extent. I nevertheless find, from a paper of Dr Lucky's, in the 4th number of the Medical recorder, that he used the lancet to a very considerable extent, without effect

Opium. Of the ~~efficacy~~ efficacy of this medicine, given in such large doses as spoken of by Dr Lucky, I can say nothing, having myself

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made use of it, only in the common doses, and in them with the result heretofore men=tioned

The circumstance of the stomach's rejecting every thing, that was administered, precluded me the opportunity of knowing, what the effect of other remedies would have been had not this irritability prevailed

Injections. The tobacco injection was the prin=ciple remedy, which I had recourse to: but with it often repeated, a considerable length of time, always elapsed, before evacuations were effected or relief obtained. The feces on all occasions appeared more to be wash=ed away by the attention of the injections, than any great effect, from the tobacco on the intestines - small scales or flakes only ap=pearing in them

The following case related to me, by a gentleman on whose veracity, I have the

utmost

utmost reliance, gave rise to the opinion advanced, in the first part of this essay

A negro man engaged in the management of a lead furnace, then in operation, was seized with this disease: his owner not being able to procure medical aid, was induced by the situation of his servant, to make some effort towards his relief, with this view, (having heard that I had used the tobacco injection:) he administered per anum, a strong decoction of tobacco. which was followed, by an immediate evacuation of the contents of the bowels and syncope. The man recovered from this state, in a very few minutes, and never complained in such a manner, as to induce the conclusion, that the tobacco had produced any very great degree of irritation, on the coats of the intestines.

Having observed stools and other donus

=lic animals, in the vicinity of lead mines, to be very subject to this disease; so much so indeed as to render it very dif=ficult to raise them; I resolved with the first opportunity, to try the effect of this strong infusion on them. I procured for this purpose, at different times, ~~three~~ dogs, after having satis=fied myself that they were affected with this disease. Under the determination to ascertain the effect clearly with the first I commenced with the common infusion, which produced but a slight fecal evacu=ation and subsequently moderate efforts to vomit. I then administered the strong or saturated decoction, which in a few seconds, was evacuated with a copious ~~dis=charge~~ of feces; the dog fell down deprived of all voluntary motion, but after a few mo=ments arose, and walked off very feebly though perfectly relieved from the disease; which did

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* The writer of this paper begs leave to observe, that the experiments were conducted under no expectation, that they would ever be the subject of this essay; he therefore offers this as an apology for their not being detailed with that minuteness they otherwise would have been.

not return. With the other two the same plan was pursued, with the omission of the injection of the weak infusion, and no marked variation of results was observed*

From these experiments, I have drawn this inference, that the weaker infusion has the effect, by being longer retained in the intestines, of producing greater irritation on these coats, than the stronger, which appears to be prevented in the latter, by the quickness with which it is expelled

The well known narcotic and poisonous properties of this article and its effects in the hands of others; have so well convinced me of the danger of its ~~employment~~, that I think no one, in the present state of the investigation would be justified in its administration, but as a dernier resort; after having failed with the usual remedies and the common infusion. I am however, strongly persuaded that

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that is, like many other poisons, which are sometimes by accident or design taken into the stomach, are rendered innoxious by their quantity, causing them to be ejected, before they have time to exert their deleterious influence — And that the tobacco, may be peculiarly suited to those cases of colic, produced by lead; where I suppose the torpor of the intestines may exist in a greater degree, than in any other case

Now gentlemen tender to you my unfeigned thanks for the advantages I have derived from your several lectures, and conclude this unguarded statement of facts, so fully sensible of its imperfections, that I have only to add, that nothing short of the necessity imposed and the reliance I have on the liberality and candor of the body, to whose inspection it is to be subjected, could have forced me to have exposed it a